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THREE LETTERS

TO

LORD VISCOUNT HOWE.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

R E M A R K S .

ON THE

ATTACK at BUNKER'S HILL.

James G. Thompson

L O N D O N :

Printed for G. WILKIE, at No. 71, in St. Paul's
Church-Yard.

MDCCLXXX.

THE LETTERS

LORD VISCOUNT HOWE

TO WHOM THEY WERE ADDRESSED

E. M. A. R. S.

ON THE

ATTACK ON BUNKER'S HILL

BY

LORD HOWE

PRINTED BY O. W. ...

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5/29/9

THREE LETTERS
TO
LORD VISCOUNT HOWE.

LETTER I.

MY LORD,

YOUR Lordship was pleased to make a complaint in the House of Commons against two Pamphlets, or Letters, concerning your own and your Brother's conduct in America: and, after insinuating, that not a tenth part of the charges there alleged were true, set yourself to disprove a charge of your having bought a parcel of Gunpowder; which somebody said was ill done in you, and which you told the House was well done.

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From hence, my Lord, we might naturally conclude, that this Gunpowder purchase made one of the principal accusations brought against you in those Letters : yet, unfortunately for your Lordship, there is not in them one single word about this Gunpowder.

After having hinted to the House, that not a tenth part of the facts related in those books were true, it might have been expected that you would have chosen out some one of them at least to refute. Does it not therefore afford a very bad preface of your power to defend yourself, that, instead of answering any one of the numerous charges, which are *really* contained in those Letters, you chuse to vamp up a charge of your own against yourself ; and to answer what you call a calumny, which is not there ?

Before your Lordship told it, I had never heard that you had bought any parcel of prize powder at all. But whatever you may have said in praise of it *now*, in the House of Commons ; yet during the time while D'Estaing was upon the coast, there seems to have been a very great indisposition towards trying the strength of it.

At Rhode Island your Lordship adopted the new method of manœuvring with D'Estaing ; and, instead of shutting him up, and destroying
his

his ships in Connanicut, or fighting them as they came in detail out of it, you suffered him to come out to open sea; and then, when there was a prospect of an engagement, took care to keep your own person out of danger, by hoisting your flag on board a smaller vessel, where you might look on in safety. In consequence of this, you soon after lost your fleet, and your fleet lost their Commander.

After two days search, you found it all safe at Sandy Hook; when the French ships had been seen just by, dismasted, disruddered, and otherwise disabled by the storm, and the cannonade, they had suffered in getting out of Connanicut: yet you kept your fleet nine days within the Hook, while the French were repairing their crippled ships as well as they could, or towing off those which could not sail, till Sir James Wallace brought you notice that the enemy were gone off towards Boston; and then at length you pursued them, exactly in the same manner in which your Brother invariably pursued the rebels; taking care never to overtake them, but always to come up within an hour or two after they were gone.

But your Lordship was pleased to tell the House, that if one tenth part of what is alleged in those Letters be true, you should not deserve to exist.—
A very bold, and, in any other times, a very hazardous

zardous assertion. But as this is all the proof which you have yet given of your innocence, I have authority to say, that the Author of those Letters can, just as safely declare, that he shall think himself equally undeserving, if your Lordship can disprove one-tenth part only of the charges there adduced.

Your Lordship's part in these charges may hereafter be considered; but as you make your Brother's defence a common cause with your own, you will give me leave to ask, Are then these the only charges which have been brought against his conduct? or has nobody accused him, but only the Author of these Letters? Your Lordship, surely, might have known, that all men now join in his condemnation.

In order, however, to convince you, that this Author is far from being the only calumniator of his conduct, I shall now shew you that the General has the misfortune of having every other set of men throughout the empire calumniating him in the same manner; except only his own particular creatures, who have been promoted by his favour, or enormously enriched by his connivance.

My Lord, the first and worst of his calumniators are his own Letters, printed in the Gazettes: these alone, when the circumstances of the actions,

tions, and the situations of places came to be known, which here, in England, they could not be till near a twelvemonth after; these alone, I say, in the judgment of every discerning man, have appeared sufficient to convict him. And if any Gentleman will read The Remarks upon his Account of himself at Long Island, printed for Fielding; or the Observations on his Conduct at White Plains, printed for Bew, it will plainly appear, from his own account, that, at each of these places, he had Mr. Washington and his whole army at his mercy; and that, if at either of them he had chosen to put an end to the rebellion, he would then have left no ground for these Letters, which are written upon his proceedings afterwards.

My Lord, the next evidence I have to produce, is the concurrent unvarying testimony of every individual in America that saw and observed his conduct. The Loyalists in America naturally wrote to their friends here, in England, an account of what they heard and saw upon the spot; and these all agree in condemning his conduct, as proceeding from extreme ignorance, timidity, or treachery. There was a collection of these Letters published by Bew, under the title of Historical Anecdotes; in which you will find, that the General has the misfortune of being condemned by all the Loyal Americans, as much as he is by the Author of these Letters, which you complain of.

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But the American Loyalists were a people, for whom, of all others, the General seems to have had the least regard: perhaps, therefore, he may be much more concerned at being told, that the American Rebels entertain just the same opinion of him, and condemn just the same parts of his military conduct, as the American Loyalists did; with this only difference, that the King's friends saw it with indignation, and the King's enemies with contempt. My Lord, some months before the General left America, a Pamphlet was published there, called, *The American Crisis*; written by the Secretary of the Congress, under their direction, and the instructions of their best Generals. The Book is now in England; and the chief passages in it have been reprinted in a Pamphlet, called *Strictures on General Howe's Mischianza*. You will there find, that for all those parts of the General's conduct, which are blamed by the King's friends, he is laughed at by the King's enemies. Your Lordship may see this exemplified at large in the *Strictures* printed by Bew. I shall transcribe only one paragraph of it, as a specimen of all the rest.

“Let me ask, Sir, what great exploits have you performed? Through all the variety of changes and opportunities which this war has produced, I know of no one action of yours that can be styled masterly. You have moved in and out, backward and forward, round and round, as if valour consisted

fisted in a military jig. The history and figure of your movements would be truly ridiculous, could they be justly delineated. They resemble the labours of a puppy pursuing his tail : the end is at the same distance ; and all the turnings round must be done over again." Such is the sovereign contempt which the Rebels express of him.

My Lord, it is not in their public writings only, that the Rebels treat him in this scornful manner : but even in their private and most confidential correspondences with one another, they express the same sentiments of contempt.

After the battle of Brandy-wine, there were found by an English officer in the tent of Colonel Hamilton, Secretary to Washington, four letters, which had passed between Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Levingston, the Rebel Governor of the Jerseys. They are dated in July, and the very beginning of August ; just at that fatal period, when, instead of fighting Mr. Washington at Bound-brook, the General run away from him to Amboy ; and was preparing to hide the King's army for two months at sea, till Burgoyne should be defeated ; a measure so very absurd, that the rebels could not believe it, and suspected it to be only a feint. *Whether the enemy are gone to the southward, is, in my opinion, very doubtful. Should they return suddenly to this place (Jersey and York river), they*
would

would leave Burgoyne little to do. Thus Mr. Levingstone writes to Colonel Hamilton, August 2d, after our troops were failed. But previous to this, while the army was yet at Amboy, Col. Hamilton in his letter to Levingston, after laughing at the General's having suffered himself to be driven out of the Jerseys to Amboy, observes, that they are now meditating some water expedition; that whether they were going is not known, and that they can have no business to the southward. "If, says he, they understood their true interest, they will remain quiet where they now are, and draw their whole force to a single point, and make a bold effort against our main army. If they could defeat that, there is no saying what might follow. If they do not, all they can do will be in vain."—Whether they will observe this conduct or not, is hard to tell. The presumption is against it: *For they have Generals that act like fools.*

My Lord, to which of you belongs the first merit of this water expedition, you are yourselves best able to determine. But after what is said in these Letters, you must both of you acknowledge, that Mr. Galloway was not the only one who foresaw and denounced the folly of it.

The General, your Lordship sees, is singularly unfortunate: for the most sensible leaders among the Rebels, as well as the Loyalists, calumniate him

him in just the same manner, and both condemn the same proceedings.

After having lost the good opinion of all the King's subjects, Rebels as well as Loyalists, would your Lordship wish to appeal to the judgment of foreigners, who cannot have much of party bias on either side? Hear then what a very sensible French Officer writes in confidence to his friend at Paris. The letter was taken in a French prize brought into Glasgow. The writer is a Major Du Portail in the French service, but a Brigadier in the American; it is dated 11th Dec. 1777. After many very sensible and just observations, he tells his friend, that the Americans' success was not owing to their strength, but to the astonishing conduct of the British forces; and in another part, to the *lenteur & timidité* of the British General.

This Frenchman did not know that the British General's party connections wished him not to conquer; and that they could subsist no longer than while that rebellion was kept alive.

After having produced such a variety of authorities, and laid before your Lordship the evidence of the General's own letters, the unvaried testimony of all the American Loyalists, and of the most knowing leaders among the American re-

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bels ; and that not only in their public writings, but also in their private and confidential correspondences ; and after having given you the sentiments of a very sensible and impartial French officer serving in the rebel army ; it is hoped that your Lordship, finding the charges contained in these Letters supported by such a variety of other evidences, will be a little less prodigal in your assertions, and not risque your existence upon the disproof of them.

LETTER

L E T T E R II.

I Now return to your Lordship's declaration in the House of Commons, That you will answer only in that House. A very wise and prudent resolution—in that House, which you know will never enter into the subject, where you are sure to have the whole weight of Opposition ready to support you ; and where you know that no one will take upon himself the invidious task of answering, and much less of accusing you.

But when your Lordship declares that the charges contained in these Letters are of so heinous a nature, that, if they were true, you ought to forfeit your existence ; the acknowledging the greatness of a crime is no disproof of the truth of it. And when such important charges are brought against you, in which the Public is so much concerned, is the opinion of the whole nation a matter of so little consequence, that you should chuse to bear the blame of having ruined your country, rather than clear up your conduct, if you can do it, to the satisfaction of all mankind ? After such a constant and avowed silence in every other place, will not all men be apt to suspect, that you therefore chuse to confine your defence within the walls of the House of Commons, because you

are conscious that you cannot justify yourself any where else?

But since you chuse to make the House of Commons your only Court of Judicature, and profess to answer in that House only, why did you not justify yourselves from the charges which were brought against your Brother and you in that House? Did not Mr. Galloway openly accuse you in the House of Commons? Why did you not cross-examine, and confute him, if you could do it? and as you certainly might, and would have done, if the accusations had not been true. Yet neither of you then ventured to contradict him in any one fact; and the few questions, which you did ask him, turned to your stronger conviction.

My Lord, in that House of Commons itself, where only you profess to be answerable, you heard a charge brought against your Brother and you, of a more heinous nature than any of those which are enumerated in these Letters. Mr. Galloway declared to the House, that you advised him and the other magistrates of Philadelphia, to go over to the Rebels. That is, you, the King's General and Admiral, advised the King's most faithful subjects to renounce their allegiance, turn traitors to their Sovereign, and go over to the King's enemies, and strengthen that rebellion which you were sent to suppress.

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Your Lordship knows, that during the time the English army remained in Philadelphia, no persons were more active in the King's service, or took a more decisive part against the Rebels, than these Magistrates. Had these Gentlemen, therefore, who were the most eminent supporters of the Royal Cause, turned against it, under such an example what an American would have adhered to it? Their desertion would have fully confirmed the report, which the Congress then gave out, that the English forces were going to leave America.

My Lord, this advice was not given them under any injunction of secrecy: If, therefore, they had followed it, and gone over to the rebels; in the strict examination they must have undergone, one of the most obvious means of ingratiating themselves with their new masters, must have been to inform them, who gave them that advice. And what just ground of triumph must this intelligence have given to the King's enemies, and of depression to his friends! The only chance his Majesty had, was, that his more faithful American subjects would not have believed it. And doubtless, notwithstanding all that disregard to the interest of your Sovereign, which many of them have thought they had discovered in your conduct, they might well have suspected, that men of such high rank, even if they regarded only
their

their own personal safety when they came home, would never have ventured to give such advice.

Had these magistrates been obscure persons, and men of profligate characters, the baseness, if not the treachery of the fact might have weighed against the credibility of the witnesses. But when it should have been publicly acknowledged, that men of their known character and veracity, each of them examined separately, had all agreed in the same account; after such a concurrence of evidence, it would have been impossible for any to doubt of it. And what man in America could have adhered to the Royal cause, after the King's own General and Admiral had advised the King's most zealous friends to abandon it?

My Lord, these deserters must not only have confessed all they knew, but must have done all they could to the prejudice of the Royal cause. In order to merit their pardon, it would have been expected, that they should take an active part in the rebellion, and excite all their former adherents to join in it. Under the influence of their example, their authority, and their superior abilities, it cannot be doubted but that the whole country would have risen against a cause, which they saw abandoned by its greatest advocates. Under these circumstances, it would have been impossible for Sir Henry Clinton to support himself

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against

against such a general rising, and his army could never have forced their way through the Jerseys back to New York. That army's being cut off would have stamped a value upon your Brother's generalship, which no one otherwise could have found.

We should then have been told, that no man was so great a General as Sir W. Howe. That although, indeed, the rebel force was invincible, yet he had preserved the Royal army, so long as he had the command of it; but that the Ministry at home had treacherously obliged him to resign it. We should then much oftener have heard, and much more plausibly have been told, that the Ministry had formed a settled design *to disgrace all our best Commanders*; and that they had lost us both the Royal armies in consequence of it.

This, my Lord, would have afforded a better chance for oversetting them, than even the French declaration; the news of which was followed by those extraordinary triumphs of your *Mischianza*.

Such were the natural and obvious consequences, which must have resulted from these Gentlemen's taking the advice you gave them. After this, it is in vain for you to complain of other lesser charges in these Letters. You heard yourselves
accused

accused with having given this advice ; you neither of you ventured to deny the fact, or attempted the least defence. But even in that House, where only you chuse to be accountable, you both of you silently sunk under the charge.

My Lord, I am a very incompetent judge of what practices they are, which come within the statute of treason ; but the advising of the King's loyal subjects to renounce their allegiance, and go over to the rebels, must to a common understanding appear to be very like to aiding and abetting a rebellion. Leaving others, however, to determine the law question, every man surely must see, that the King's General and Admiral should have been the last men to have given such advice.

But, my Lord, whatever accession of strength the influence and abilities of these Gentlemen might have brought to the rebel cause ; and however destructive it might have proved to the King's army, and to the Royal interest, their desertion would have been a very important piece of service to your own.

These Magistrates of Philadelphia, during your nine months residence there, may have been thought to know too much, Mr. Galloway especially, more than you might wish to have told. The influence of their defection, and the knowledge

ledge of the King's General and Admiral's having advised them to it, might have ruined your successor; but their going over to the rebels would have been a sure means of preventing their coming to England, and would have effectually suppressed a variety of particulars which have since opened the eyes of the nation,

Your Lordship will give me leave to mention a few of these, as a specimen of many more.

After General H——e, in spite of all the warnings which had been given him, had suffered the rebels to possess and fortify themselves in Red Bank, they very prudently cut the dykes of the Delaware, and overflowed the country all round them. Mr. Galloway offered his service, to repair the dykes; and, by draining off the water, enable the King's troops to make their approaches to it. A man of common sagacity would naturally have judged, that an inhabitant of the country, whose estate lay upon the river Delaware, should be the best acquainted with the manners of it, and be the best capable of opening or stopping the dykes of it. But the General was by much too wise to accept of any advice; and yet not quite wise enough to do without it. After losing six weeks of the best part of the campaign, and two of the best Hessian Colonels, with five hundred of the troops, Lord Cornwallis at length sent for Mr.

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Galloway,

Galloway, and desired him to undertake the draining of the country. He did it in six days, and enabled the King's forces to make their approaches, and take the place; which might much more easily have been effected six weeks sooner.

There is another fact, which, if you could have persuaded Mr. Galloway to turn rebel, we should never have heard of. During the nine months, while, at an expence of many thousand pounds a day, the General and his army were indulging themselves in their pleasures at Philadelphia, and only sent out a few foraging parties; Mr. Galloway, observing the difficulties of making any distant excursions with only British troops, upon account of their ignorance of the country, and the danger of their being cut off, from their want of knowing the roads; in order to remedy this evil, offered to raise a regiment of horse from amongst the inhabitants of the country; which would then give confidence to the troops in their excursions, from their knowing that they should never want the proper guides to bring them off. The General chose to permit him to levy only a troop; and that was not to be accepted, unless it was raised within a month. It was done in less than that time; and was mounted with the best horses, from the stables of the disaffected Gentlemen within the rebel lines. With this troop, and about ninety foot, which he also raised, by means of the intelligence

ligence he held in the Jerseys and Pennsylvania, he was enabled continually to plan successful excursions; and, in one of them, seized and brought in six thousand yards of cloth, which he had notice sent him was laid up at a certain mill, for cloathing of the rebel army. And this was one great cause of those wretches remaining half naked, during the winter, at Valley Forge; or rather of their deserting, half-naked, to Philadelphia.

In the same spring 1778, Mr. Galloway informed the General, he had intelligence that the Governor, Assembly, and Council of the Jerseys, were, on a certain day, to be at Trenton; and that, if he pleased, he would instruct his corps to seize them all, and bring them prisoners to Philadelphia. The seizing of 50 principal Gentlemen at once, in whom lay the whole government of the province, would have annihilated the rebel authority. And the General might then have profited of his former error; and by arming the well-affected inhabitants, and disarming the ill-affected, might have fixed the King's authority in that whole intermediate province between Philadelphia and New York. The General could not decently reject so advantageous a proposal; and, with a very good grace, offered a body of the King's troops to support this provincial corps in bringing the prisoners off. Every thing was prepared accordingly; the time for marching was

nearly come, and there could be little doubt of the success; when Sir W—— H——e sent his Aid-de-camp to Mr. Galloway, to say that the expedition must not go on. The men were all ready, and the repeated intelligence was so very exact, and so well laid, that it could scarcely fail in the execution. Why then not go on? The reason assigned was, that a cartel was soon to be settled, and that the taking them prisoners would answer no good purpose, as they would be immediately exchanged.

The reader will recollect, that after the battle of Brandywine, the Royal army was nearer to Philadelphia than the rebels were; but that Sir W—— H——e chose to halt his army for five days, till the rebels had time to evacuate that city at leisure. That beside their magazines, their cannon, and stores, and all the necessaries for their army, the rebels carried off a number of the principal well-affected inhabitants of that city, chiefly Quakers, that they might not be of service to the Royal cause. That these Gentlemen were, at that very time, held in captivity in Virginia, at a distance from their houses, their business, and their wives and families. That, beside these Quakers, Governor Franklin was then languishing in a log-house in Connecticut, and many other capital Gentlemen enduring the harshest imprisonment in other places; yet so little did the sufferings of these loyalists merit

the General's regard, that he seems not to think it worth while to take a number of the principal rebels to redeem them.

The Reader must have a very mean opinion indeed of Sir W—— H——e's understanding, if he can persuade himself that the reason given to Mr. Galloway was the true one: but the seizing of 50 principal rebels at a stroke, and annihilating the rebel government, and thereby fixing the royal authority in three contiguous colonies, might have too much disturbed that balance of power between the rebel and the royal cause, which the General's party might wish him to keep up.

Your Lordship cannot want to be informed, that there are twenty other such curious anecdotes which might be enumerated; and knowing this, we cannot wonder that you ventured on so very extraordinary a method to prevent their coming to the public notice.

LETTER

L E T T E R I I I .

MY LORD,

THERE is one more subject, which demands the Public's and your Lordship's attention; and that is, the very conspicuous part you bear in your triumphal Mischianza; for you, my Lord, had your *naval* triumph, as well as the General his *land* one. We might have left your Brother to be pleased with his rattle of a raree-show: But how a man of your understanding could have joined in such multifarious scenes of folly, vanity, and arrogance, is beyond any other man's comprehension. Yet you too, like the General, had your triumphal arch; but in what part of America was it, that you acquired those naval trophies with which it was adorned? Or what Neptune had favoured you so much, as to give you any pretension to place him standing on the top of it? *Sea* victory you had *none*; and *could* have none: for you had no enemy to contend with: Yet a great and noble Admiral, attended by fourscore ships of war, institutes for himself a triumph over an enemy, that had not one single line of battle ship to oppose to him. Is it possible to represent a greater absurdity?

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My Lord, having no enemies to oppose you at sea, your country might have hoped, that you would at least have fought them in their ports. But nothing seems to have been farther from your thoughts. In no period of our history is there to be found an instance of an Admiral, intrusted with so great a fleet, doing so little. At the head of 80 or 90 ships of war of every size, and of every convenient draft of water, attended by 300 transports, and 150 flat boats, what single service did you perform worthy of being once mentioned; much less of being celebrated by a triumph? The services you *might* have done for your country, suggested themselves to every man: The services you *did* do it, can be recorded by none: for we are yet to learn them.

At the time when you came to the command, the rebels were in want of cannon, musquets, powder, clothing, and all kind of military stores. The supply of these articles could be brought them only by sea. Their ports were all open and unguarded. Yet you suffered them to import all these necessaries of war, with scarce any interruption. With that immense naval force, which was committed to you for suppressing the rebellion, what one naval enterprise did you form for that purpose? What one enemy's port did you destroy? What one river did you shut up? What one branch of the rebel supplies did you cut off? Over
whom

whom then was it that you instituted this triumph?
Or where was it you gained those plumes for your
arch, which it was so superbly stuck with?

From the nauseous encomiums, with which you both courted the Gentlemen of the navy, we might suppose, that there was some very extraordinary merit—in carrying the King's forces from one island to another. The General tells us : *The presence of Lord Howe, the activity of Commodore Hotham, most of the Captains, and the navy officers in general, were infinitely conducive to the King's service* in this difficult movement. And your Lordship, not to be behind him, writes : “ That you think
“ it incumbent on you, to represent on this occasion, and you cannot too pointedly express the
“ unabating perseverance, and alacrity, with which
“ the officers and seamen of the ships of war and
“ transports have supported a long attendance,
“ and unusual degree of fatigue, consequent on
“ these different movements of the army.” Our brave officers and seamen, who felt themselves capable of so much greater things, must have disdained these extravagant praises, given to so paltry a service. The loitering at anchor near a whole year in the harbour of New York ; and employing about one summer's day in a month, in rowing the army from Staten Island to Long Island ; from thence to New York Island ; and from that to Frog's Neck ; and after six days rest, from thence

to

to Rochelle, is described in much more pompous terms, than were ever applied to a Hawke's or a Saunders's naval campaigns. Yet for this farce of a first, second, and third embarkation; *of pressing through Hell Gate; and of ships covering the landing,* where there was not a single ship or man to oppose you, you deemed yourself worthy of a naval triumph.

What a wonderful importance do actions grow to, by being done at a distance! Yet, if a noble Admiral, with a vast fleet of men of war and transports, were to lie a whole year in Portsmouth harbour, and once in 40 days, during the summer months, were to see an army of 16,000 men transported in flat boats from Gosport to Portsmouth, and from Portsmouth to Gosport, and once in the summer to the Isle of Wight; and then, after six days resting time, rowed back again, we might equally admire *the unabating perseverance and alacrity with which they supported the long attendance, and unsual fatigue,* of such a service: and should the noble Admiral and his officers look on upon these movements, would not the presence of any such noble Lord be just *as infinitely conducive to the King's service?*

After paying your court to the Gentlemen of the navy, your Lordship bespeaks the good word of the masters and seamen of the transports, for

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their

their unabating perseverance in supporting the unusual fatigue, of lying the whole summer in York harbour, with little else to do, but to look on and receive their wages. And yet, my Lord, how *pointedly* soever you may express this, the masters and owners would as bluntly tell you, that they would be glad to charter their ships for seven years together, upon the same service.

Far be it from me to lessen the merit of these masters and seamen: They have doubtless that of having executed with alacrity the orders you gave them. But can any thing be more ridiculous, than a pointed description of the unusual fatigue of lying at anchor eleven months together in the East River?

I could name to your Lordship another day's service in a subsequent year, which perhaps was equally fatiguing with any in this: and that is the day in which you ordered up all the transports to display their colours in honour of your triumphal *Mischianza*, and employed the King's ships of war *magnificently decorated*, and the King's gallies in three divisions, *dressed out in a variety of colours and streamers*, with your barges and flat boats in rowing about your women and your music. But the account of this, your grand regatta, you leave to your historian *pointedly* to relate: And he has done

it in so *pointed* a manner, as must for ever goad you on the reflection*.

Under all that enormous expence, which the nation incurred in the maintenance of your fleet, you seem to have thought, that you had nothing to do with it, but to dangle after your Brother, and look on and see him in effect do nothing at all. True it is, that with the command of 100 flat boats, and 200 transports, all of which too had their boats, and of 60 ships of war, you conveyed the army up and down in the harbour of New York, whithersoever the General pleased. And we acknowledge your merit as Ferry Master General to the King's troops: But is there any thing in this employment of such transcendent dignity, as to merit a triumph?

My Lord, a great Commander, like the antient heroes, ought no more to move without his historian or poet, than without his sword, by his side; and accordingly we find that you had your poet as well as your historian and upholsterer to fit up your *Mischianza*. This prince of bards, after presenting his laurel wreath, and after telling us of a *Mars plumed with conquest*, with twenty other absurd instances of flattery, refers us to the North

* See the account copied in the Gentleman's Magazine for August 1778.

River as the scene of his patron's laurels. But on looking back to your correspondence, we find nothing in your conduct there, that can do you honour; but much, very much, which we suffered in those parts, to the national disgrace. After the defeat at Long Island, when Washington and his army lay at your mercy, and either of you might have taken them all prisoners; you seem to have been as little disposed to intercept them at sea, as the General was at land. He gave them three days leisure to prepare for their flight over to New York; and you for six tides kept your fleet out of sight of the Ferry, as if you intended they should not be intercepted in their passage. The masters of transports, in defiance of the enemies batteries, could force their way up; but your favourite Capt. H. too well knew how to pay his court to attempt it, though the tide here ran nearly twice as strong as his *rapid stream* of the Delaware.

My Lord, the taking of Washington and his whole army, would have effectually disabled the rebels from ever raising another; and would have saved to his Majesty the lives of 100,000 subjects; and to the nation an expence of 50 millions; beside the preventing a French and Spanish war, which is now brought upon us. The putting an immediate end to the rebellion, was therefore an object of the utmost importance

to the nation: but it could be of none to those who thought the fixing the present Ministers a greater evil than the continuance of it. But whatever may have been your sentiments; yet at that very time, when you had just received the news of the French declaration; and when you saw that by carrying away the King's southern army to sea, you had been the ruin of his northern one, and had brought on a French war in consequence of it; at such a time you might have refrained from making sport at the public calamities: at such a time you might at least have spared this public triumph. For though it was the saving of your party, yet it may prove to be ruin and death to your country.

My Lord, any other Admiral probably would not have supposed that his Sovereign had trusted him with so large a fleet, merely to lie still, and suffer his enemies to escape out of Long Island, over a ferry of near a mile, without his giving them the least interruption. Yet you seem to have determined, that it was no part of your duty: and the manner in which your letter speaks of this escape, indicates not the least symptom of an intention or even a wish to have prevented it.

Yet at this very time, when there was not, on the whole ocean, a single ship of force to oppose you; and while you seem to have thought that there was no one service in which you could employ

ploy the immense force you had already; you wrote home for 10 more line of battle ships, to help you in that nothing you had to do. The Reader may justly suspect I feign: but, if he will turn to the General's letter of the 25th Sept. 1776, he will find, that, as if he could not put the nation to expence enough, in maintaining fourscore ships of war, 150 flat boats, and 200 transports, all of which, as well as the ships of war, had their boats at his service; he wanted them double manned too, for the exprefs purpose of his being attended by them with the greater state.

But Brooklyn Ferry was out of the view of your fleet; the rebels flight was in the night, and you may plead ignorance of their intention. My Lord, I am sorry to have heard, that the subsequent conduct of your fleet on the two following days, gives but too much reason to fear, that if the rebel flight had been in the day-time, and in full view of your ships, they would have met with as little interruption. Hear what the rebels boast, and what eye-witnesses relate.

After the main part of the rebel army had crossed over to New York, there was another part of them left on Governor's Island, with tents for 2000 men, and cannon and all kinds of military stores, and without a single vessel to carry them out of it.

These

These troops, we might have hoped, you would have been doubly careful to secure, after having suffered the others to escape. The Eagle and other ships were now moved up, and might, if you had chosen it, have placed themselves in such a manner between Governor's Island and New York, as to cut off all communication. The King's troops were now in possession of Red Hook and of Fort Sterling, and standing ready upon the shore within a mile of Governor's Island, expecting every minute that the boats, which lay just below, would be sent for them to pass over, and take possession of it. The part of the island, upon which they might land, could be intirely swept by the cannon from Red Hook and Fort Sterling. In this position, my Lord, and in full view of the Eagle and the fleet and army, the rebels were permitted to send three or four boats backward and forward from New York, during all that day, and moon-light night, and all the next day, till one o'clock in the afternoon, to fetch off, first the troops, and then the cannon and tents, and at last all the other stores, which they thought worth the bringing away;——both armies, with astonishment looking on; and seeing them thus employed for two days together, with no other interruption, than a few random shot from the forts, and from the Eagle, with as little effect as your Captain H——d had done three or four days before against Red Hook.

My

My Lord, the wind and weather were fair, and the spring tide, which runs nearly six knots an hour, would have carried your ships in half an hour up above the island : or the boats from below might in as little time have carried a body of troops to take possession of it. But your Lordship, whom your Brother's letters celebrate as so accomplished a Ferry-Master, did not chuse to do either of these : but suffered them to take themselves away, and every thing they wanted, to New York. Was this, my Lord, the way to *finish* the rebellion ? or to *nurse it up* ? Yet after all this care of them, the rebels, in the accounts they published, only laughed at your lenity ; and left it to their allies here in England to thank you for not extinguishing them both together, by putting an immediate end to the rebellion. Is this the ground, upon which your poetical flatterer builds your triumph ? Doubtless this is one of those instances, in which the rebels say, *That their fate was suspended by a thread ; and that they were saved as it were by miracle* ; and might be just matter of triumph to the rebel General, whose army was delivered from certain destruction ; but it could be none to the King's Admiral, unless they had both been on the same side.

If, from the New York river, we follow your Lordship to the Chesapeak and the Delaware, we there find many causes for national humiliation ;
but

but most assuredly none of rejoicing. Yet this is the river, which you chose to make the scene of your naval triumph, though it had never been of your conquest.—A naval triumph acted upon the *Delaware*! As well might the General have erected a trophy upon the *Rariton*; which, with 18,000 troops, and all his cannon and pontoons, he did not chuse to pass, although Washington lay with only 6000 men on the other side of it; but, after fortifying his camp with three redoubts, ran away from them, insulted by the rebels through his whole flight to Amboy; and there at last eluded his pursuers, by embarking his troops, and hiding them for two months on shipboard.

A Neptune stuck on a triumphal arch upon the Delaware! 'Tis the last of all representations you should have wished to exhibit upon that river. A Delaware Neptune was the most unfriendly deity you could have chosen: His very Tritons, in the form of row-gallies and fire-rafts, had scared you out of the mouth of it; and with the feigned sound of armies, which did not exist there, had driven you away a thousand miles to sea.

Should your Lordship's mind revolt against the supposition of your being scared; the representation is not mine; but that which you brought to the House of Commons your own favourite Cap-

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tain H——d to make of you. And a very singular specimen he gave us of his own happy choice of intelligence, and of your Lordship's no less happy credulity. At a time when the whole country knew, that there was not a single company of the rebel army in the province; and that Washington with all his little force was up in the Jerseys, a hundred miles off, above Newcastle; he had the good fortune to find out a man, at another hundred miles below, to give him intelligence that Washington had crossed the Delaware, and was in full march to Wilmington and Newcastle. In vain had the General fled from him on the Rariton; he was now like to meet him doubly terrible upon the Delaware. And your Lordship, seeming to dread the water-guard as much as the General did the land one, in two hours time took your flight to sea; both of you agreeing to bury the King's army for another month in the Atlantic.

My Lord, would Admiral Saunders have taken Quebec, if he had suffered himself to be deterred by row-gallies and fire-rafts? And yet the river at Quebec had three times the rapidity, and not half the breadth of the Delaware at Newcastle; where too, instead of a superior army, as the French had at Quebec, the rebels had not a man to oppose your landing.

Your

Your Lordship certainly has it at your option to say, that you believed Captain Hammond's intelligence, or that you did not; as you may wish to prefer the credit of your judgment, or of your integrity. And far be it from me to determine, whether you went to Chesapeak, because you was frightened out of the Delaware; or whether you was frightened out of the Delaware, because you had pre-determined to go to Chesapeak.

From the evidence of Mr. Galloway, and the separate conferences he had with you, and with the General, it appears, that the voyage to Chesapeak was a measure resolved on long before you left New York. Although therefore the General had suffered himself to be driven out of the Jerseys, and to be pursued to the last town in it; yet I will not suppose, that he was driven out of the Delaware by the fear of meeting Mr. Washington at Newcastle; much less that your Lordship was frightened by those spectres of terror, which had been raised up for you. But it was necessary to furnish yourselves with some pretence, for your acting contrary to the whole tenor of the General's own letters; for the breach of every promise he had made, and for the violation of the repeated orders of his Sovereign. The resolution therefore to leave the Delaware, and go up the Chesapeak, *seems* at least not to have proceeded from the intelligence received on the Delaware; but the De-

ware intelligence from the previous resolution to go up the Chesapeake.

My Lord, even after you had embarked the King's army, you kept the troops stifling in the ships holds for three weeks of the hottest season of the year, till you received the news that Burgoyne had taken Ticonderoga, and was coming towards you; and then, though the General's own letters, and the King's constant orders, had made the co-operation with the northern army the primary object of the war; yet, the third day after you had heard that Burgoyne was coming from the northward, you set sail for a month's voyage to the southward.

On the 17th of July Sir William Howe wrote to General Burgoyne from New York: " My intention is for Pennsylvania; where I expect to meet Washington;" *but if he goes to the northward, contrary to my expectations, and you can keep him at bay, be assured I shall soon be after him, to relieve you.* Yet in six days after this, knowing that Washington was up the North River, and in full readiness, if he pleased, to go northward, he left him in that position; and by setting off to sea, put himself in an absolute incapacity of fulfilling this solemn assurance, which he had just given.

My

My Lord, had the army landed at Newcastle, and marched to Philadelphia, even *that* might have made a timely diversion. At so critical a period, had the army been *any where* at land, it might have operated in some measure in favour of Burgoyne; and been of some service to the Royal cause; you resolved therefore that it should be *no where*; and carried it out to sea, where it could not possibly be of any the least service to either.

During the very time while you was hiding the King's army in the ocean, the fatal defeat at Bennington put a period to all Burgoyne's successes. And after this, every purpose, which could have been proposed by the voyage, was fully answered. The General had got through the four prime summer months, without having suffered the King's army to do the rebels any hurt: and, by having starved all his horses, had crippled its proceedings for a fifth. Your fleet therefore now sailed up the Delaware without any hesitation: Burgoyne's army was effectually ruined; and all the difficulties and terrors of its navigation were now vanished.

These great events on the Delaware, in your Lordship's estimation, may have rendered it a fit scene of triumph: especially after you had just received the news from Europe, that Burgoyne's defeat had brought on a French war, and af-

forded a fairer chance than ever of oversetting the Ministry. But your country, my Lord, and your posterity, I fear, will be far from finding them a subject for rejoicing.

My Lord, the following you through all the succeeding disgraces on the Delaware, would be as irksome, as the reading over all the absurd scenes of your *Mischianza*.

Never did the Commander of a Royal fleet contrive to lose so many of the King's ships, before so contemptible an enemy, as your Lordship lost on the Delaware: nothing of which could have happened, if you would have gone up it on the 30th of July, when you was first there. For how much soever you may have chose to fear from the rebel force there, they had much more to fear from yours, which was so much superior. When afterwards you did enter it, did they ever dare to meet you with all those terrors, which were conjured up for you? They soon found that Red Bank was the only place in the river where their vessels could lie in security; and therefore as soon as that was taken, far from coming to fight you with them, they burned them all, to prevent their falling into your hands. How much more then must this tremendous water-guard have lain at your mercy, if you had been pleased to sail up the Delaware
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the 30th of July, when the works at Red Bank had never been begun, or thought of!

My Lord, this was that river, which, in consequence of your delays, was witness to the disgraceful scenes of Mud Island, where the lives of 500 brave men were prodigally thrown away: and where the ignorance and obstinacy of not ordering the proper approaches, enabled a handful of rebels for six weeks together to baffle all the attempts of your fleet and army; and to exemplify, as they boasted, the romantic tale of the defence of Bender, realized upon the Delaware.

This is the river, on which your fleet and army; for nine months together, were cooped up and insulted by the most contemptible of all enemies; whom you did not chuse to destroy. This is that river, on which you suffered the King's stores to be taken almost in sight of your fleet; and permitted the rebels to cover their own naked backs with the regimentals sent for the clothing of the King's army;—A river, which you had made remarkable for nothing but your losses; and which, till the illuminations of your triumph, you had seen illuminated with nothing but with the flames of the Augusta. Yet this is the river, upon which you chose to celebrate your senseless and absurd *Mischianza*. Senseless and absurd to the last degree, if considered as a triumph over the King's
enemies

enemies in America : but conveying a very plain and obvious sense, if considered as a triumph over the King's Ministers here at home. In spite of the numerous armies they had been sending you, sufficient at any time to have crushed the rebel army to atoms; in spite of the orders of your Sovereign, which they had transmitted to you; and in spite of all that vast fleet they had entrusted to you, and the immense expence you had brought upon your country; you had still kept the rebellion alive for three years together, till at length you had brought on a French war, which yielded the fairest chance for their ruin.

My Lord, what may be the fatal issue of this rebellion, now that France and Spain have taken their part in support of it, is more than your Lordship or any one can foresee. But should it end in the dissolution of the empire, and the ruin of your country, you yourselves perhaps may be then at last convinced, that the continuance of the rebellion was a worse evil than the continuance of any Ministry; and may repent the not having in due time put an end to it. In what light you will then appear to yourselves, I now leave you to make your own reflections.

REMARKS

R E M A R K S

O N T H E

ATTACK at BUNKER'S-HILL.

IF the English General had had his choice given him of the ground upon which he should find his enemy, he could not have wished to place the rebels in a situation for more certain ruin, than that in which they had placed themselves at Bunker's-hill. And yet, from some fatality in our counsels, or rather perhaps from the total absence of all timely counsel, what ought to have been destructive to them proved only so to the Royal army.

Every one knows, that the ground on which stood Charlestown and Bunker's-hill, was a peninsula. The isthmus, which joined it to the Continent, used originally to be covered at high water; but, for the convenience of the inhabitants, had a causeway raised upon it, which answered all the purposes of a wharf for landing upon. And the land adjoining was firm, good ground, having formerly been an apple-orchard.

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Nothing

Nothing can be more obvious, especially if the Reader will look upon the Plan, than that the army, by landing at the neck or isthmus, must have entirely cut off the rebels retreat, and not a man of them could have escaped.

The water in the Mystic river was deep enough for the gun-boats and smaller vessels to lie very near to this causeway; to cover and protect the landing of our own army, and to prevent any farther reinforcements being sent to the enemy; as well as to secure the retreat and re-embarkation of our own army, if that could have become necessary.

The ambuscade which flanked our troops in their march up to Bunker's-hill, and did so much mischief, had by this means been avoided.

Instead of shutting up the rebels, by landing at the isthmus, which was the place the most commodious for the descent, and for beginning the attack, the General unhappily chose to land in the face of the rebel intrenchments, and at the greatest possible distance from the neck or isthmus, and thereby left the way open for their escape: and still more unhappily, knowing nothing of the ground, attempted to march the troops in a part where they had ten or twelve rows of railing to clamber over; the lands be-

tween Charlestown and the beach being, for the convenience of the inhabitants, divided into narrow slips, not more than from ten to thirty rods over.

These posts and rails were too strong for the column to push down, and the march was so retarded by the getting over them, that the next morning they were found studded with bullets, not a hand's breath from each other.

All this was well known to the inhabitants of Boston: But they thought that military men, and such a great English General as Mr. Howe, must know better than they. And all this might have been known, and ought to have been known to the English Commander.

Had the rebels coming into this peninsula been a thing utterly unexpected, and never before thought of, the suddenness of the event might have been an apology for their not instantly thinking of the measures most proper to be taken upon such an occasion. But, far from unexpected, this was an event which they had long been apprehensive of, the possibility of which had been in contemplation for two months before. The action at Bunker's-hill was on the 17th of June; and so long before as the 21st of April, a message had been sent

to the Selectmen of Charlestown, that "if they
 "suffered the rebels to take possession of their
 "town, or to throw up any works to annoy the
 "ships, the ships would fire upon them."

The message giving them this warning, doubtless was very proper: But it was easy to foresee, that if the rebels chose to possess themselves of any part of the peninsula, the inhabitants of Charlestown could not prevent it. In all these eight weeks, therefore, it might have been hoped, that the General and Admiral should have concerted the proper measures for them to take, in case the enemy should come thither. It might have been hoped, that the Admiral should have perfectly informed himself of the depth of water in the Mystic-river, and how near at the several times of the tide the vessels could come to the causeway. We might have hoped that the General would have informed himself of every inch of ground in so small a peninsula; and have previously concerted what he ought to do, and where he ought to land, upon every appearance of an enemy. And yet we do not seem to have given ourselves the trouble of a single thought about viewing the ground, or of considering before-hand what would be the proper measures to be taken in case the enemy should appear there. Instead of this, the morning on which the enemy was discovered, at
 three

three o'clock, a council of war was to be called, which might as well have been held a month before, and many hours more given to the rebels for carrying on their works, and finishing their redoubt.

The map will shew us that Charlestown neck lies at the utmost passable distance from the rebel quarters at Cambridge and Boston neck; so that the troops had every possible advantage in landing at the causeway, and not a single man of the rebels could have escaped.

Is it necessary for a gentleman to be a soldier to see this? Will not every man's common sense, upon viewing the map, be convinced of it?

Whether, after the rebels were fled, General Clinton's advice to pursue was right or not, may be made a doubt: But if instead of having sacrificed the lives of a thousand brave men by the want of all previous concert, and never having surveyed the ground; if, instead of this negligence and inattention, we had shut up the whole rebel force in the peninsula, and destroyed and taken that whole army, there can be no doubt, but that we might then have pursued our advantage: and that if then we had marched to Roxbury and Cambridge, the troops would probably have not found a man there to oppose them; at least in
that

that general consternation, they might very easily have been dispersed : and, the other provinces not having then openly joined them, we should probably have heard nothing more of the rebellion.

It was said at the time, I have heard, that we were unwilling to make the rebels desperate ; but I hope no military man would offer to give such a reason. Veteran troops, long possessed with a very high sense of honour, like the old Spanish infantry at Rocroy, might possibly resolve to die in their ranks, and sell their lives as dearly as they could, though I know no instance in modern war of this Spanish obstinacy. But for regular British troops to be afraid of shutting up a rabble of irregular new-raised militia, that had never fired a gun, and had no honour to lose, lest they should fight too desperately for them, argues too great a degree of weakness, to be supposed of any man fit to be trusted in the King's service. Happy had it been for Mr. Burgoyne, if Mr. Gates had reasoned in this manner ; and left the King's troops a way open for their escape, for fear of making them desperate. And yet Mr. Gates, when he lived with his father in the service of Charles Duke of Bolton, was never thought to possess an understanding superior to other men ; and the letters of some of the most sensible and best informed men among the rebels shew, that they thought him scarce equal to the command.

But

But what was it we had to fear by this notion of making them desperate? The rebels could not but see the execution they had done upon the royal army in their march: and yet they ran away the instant our troops were got up to them—Was this their point of honour? Had they found themselves cut off from all possibility of retreat by our army's landing at the isthmus, in all probability they would have instantly thrown down their arms and submitted. If they had not, they must then have come out of their intrenchments, and fought their way through our army to get to the isthmus; that is to say, we chose to land, and march up to their intrenchments, and fight under every possible disadvantage, for fear that by landing at the neck, we should have obliged them to come out of their intrenchments, and fight us upon equal terms, or even upon what disadvantages the General should please to lay in their way. But the innumerable errors of that day, if they had been known in time, might have sufficiently convinced us, how little was to be expected from an army so commanded.

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FINIS

